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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

CIA No. 1186
7 July 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
ATTENTION : Col. D. A. York
SUBJECT : Field Test Number 47

1. The DM Draft of the FT-47 Test Plan has been reviewed as requested by your memorandum of 20 June 1969. The overall purpose and the general objectives appear worthwhile. The detailed plan, however, particularly in Phase II, appears to promise more definitive answers than can be realized by using the Nike Hercules system as an analog to investigate possible upgrading from air defense to ABM capabilities.

2. The compilation of possible observables proposed in Phase I should be both useful and easily done. Numerous studies are available within the intelligence community in addition to the contractor studies mentioned in the memorandum. The problem would appear to come when choosing which observables must be collected, especially if some would require on-site inspection. Here the study could well become mired in different interpretations of the effectiveness of the SA-5 as an ABM and, in particular, what component changes would be necessary to upgrade the current capabilities by given increments. Since most of the intelligence community now agrees that the system has only marginal ABM capabilities, it is not sufficient to indicate that certain changes will improve the performance in an ABM role. The heart of the issue is how much the improvements will upgrade the system. Only after such a determination can one usefully distinguish between critical and trivial observables.

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3. These difficulties would be compounded in Phase II where an attempt may be made to simulate the inspection problem by using the Nike Hercules as an analog to the SA-5. The Army (contrary to the assertion in the contract description--See p. 17) has attempted to upgrade the Nike Hercules to intercept missiles by the addition of the Hi Par radar. The attempt is generally adjudged a failure in that it is not effective. An ACDA study contract using this approach runs the risk of having a contractor manufacture a design for the SA-5 which he claims will intercept missiles. Unfortunately, the only way to test his hypothesis is to build the system and try it. In the case of the Nike Hercules, such contractor assurances were unfounded. Moreover, the uncertainty surrounding the increase in ABM capabilities that would be achieved with given component changes will make it difficult to agree on a point of departure.

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[REDACTED]
CIA Liaison Officer for ACDA

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